

D R A F T

Meeting Minutes, 1/19/06

Committee for Citizen Involvement

CCI Members Present: Basil Christopher, Teddi Duling, Bev Froude, Bill Scheiderich Trisha Swanson

CCI Members Absent: Sue Carver, Brian Kelly, Rick Parker, Stacie Yost

Staff Present: Duane Roberts, Bob Roth

1. Welcome and Introductions

Committee Chair Basil Christopher called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

As a time saver, Basil asked committee members to send any minute corrections or additions directly to Duane. [None received.]

3. City Emergency Preparedness Plan

Duane informed the group that the City Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Mike Lueck, who had been scheduled to give a presentation on this topic, was unable to attend tonight's meeting because of a conflict with a countywide flood emergency meeting. If requested, he is available to meet with the CCI at its next meeting on 2/16/06.

4. City Volunteer Program

Bob Roth, City Volunteer Coordinator, gave background detail on the City Volunteer Program. Volunteers presently serve in the library, police, engineering and in all other City departments. The volunteers are counted on to carry out certain tasks. Last year, volunteers contributed some 27,000 hours of service to the City. This number of hours equates to 13 staff positions.

The role of the Coordinator is to identify volunteer opportunities, to recruit volunteers, and to facilitate placement or the matching of volunteers and jobs. Another responsibility is coordinating volunteer recognition events and activities.

Trisha asked if there were a county-wide volunteer program. Bob responded that at present there is no inter-jurisdictional coordination, or networking, or county-wide volunteer clearing house. Trisha mentioned the City of Victoria, BC, as an example of a jurisdiction with a large volunteer bureau to coordinate regional volunteer efforts.

Bob went on to state that the City of Tigard offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. These include one-time special event activities as well as on-going activities. The largest number of on-going or regularly scheduled volunteers are used in the Library and in the

Police Reserve program. Library volunteers as a group are very diverse and include many different nationalities. Police Reserves are unpaid volunteers who are engaged in such activities as vacation home checks, or checks on the homes of residents who are away on vacation. Another category of volunteers are special project volunteers. These are home-based volunteers, who do not physically come in to work in City facilities. A new sub-category within the home-base volunteer group is the telecommuting volunteer. Current telecommuting volunteers include, among others, a graphic artist, a grant researcher, and a translator.

In terms of the number of hours contributed, City volunteering has shown a downturn in recent years. The number of younger volunteers in particular has been dropping off. Bob concludes from these trends that the “idea of public service” is weakening and that the “inter-generational chain” is being broken. He speculated that this gradual decrease in community engagement is linked to a number of factors: longer work weeks; the increase in the number of single parents and both parents working; commuting out of the area to work; and more devices, such as the computer and internet, becoming available. All these have contributed to a decrease in community connections and to a competition between volunteer and discretionary time.

The City volunteer program relies on retirees. Recruiting more retirees is one of the ways of overcoming the problem of declining volunteerism. Another way is by clarifying the volunteer commitment. A written job description helps the volunteer candidate to visualize him- or herself in a role. Also, the public expects a reward for its service. Bob tries to make people aware of the benefits of volunteer service and to market volunteering through skill development and contacts gained. Another approach is to better tailor opportunities to each individual’s “time commitment.”

Basil asked about the total number volunteer hours contributed to the City in 04 and 05. According to an annual report posted on the City webpage, the numbers of 05 hours were far fewer than for the year ago period. Bob responded that there is no standard way for reporting volunteer hours. He is not sure how the 04 numbers were generated. One time big events, such the 04 library move, may be a factor in explaining the difference between 04 and 05 aggregated hours contributed.

Basil suggested the use of comment cards to get feedback that can be used to help retain volunteers. As a recruitment idea, Trisha mentioned posting job descriptions on the webpage. At present, there is no site with links to job descriptions of each volunteer opportunity.

5. Council Goal Setting

The group reviewed the list of the City 2006 goals recommended to Council by Basil and the goals ultimately adopted by Council. Basil explained that the mayor had asked all Committee and Board chairs to provide comments and suggestions for a Council goal-setting retreat. In the case of the CCI, the turnaround time for this was one-two days. The short timeline precluded soliciting ideas from the committee as a whole.

One of the goals adopted by Council is communication-related: *Improve Communication and Relationship with Citizens*

A discussion followed. The group concurred that Basil's recommendations to the mayor reflected the committee's views.

6. Joint Meeting with City Council

Basil led a discussion of the upcoming CCI meeting with Council, set for 2/21. No conclusions were reached regarding goals for the meeting or on defining roles, if any are needed, for committee members. The discussion of this topic was continued to the February CCI meeting, which will take place the week before the joint meeting.

7. Other Business/Announcements/Next Agenda

As a future agenda item, Bill suggested bringing in school principals to talk about what they want in the way of community involvement in the schools. This includes elementary and middle school principals. Basil suggested capital improvement plan public involvement and the City traffic rating system as other topics.

The next CCI meeting is set for Thursday 2/16/06 in the City Hall Red Rock Room.